FAMILY LIFE

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NO SUBSTITUTE FOR FATHERS AND MOTHERS

Character and moral behavior develop in children in the family and are produced by the example of the parents—not by precept, or by the influence of other children, or by teachers.

They are fixed at an early age. To change them successfully in later years is such a slow and difficult task as to be virtually impossible on any large scale.

Hence, the only possibility of creating good citizens is, in practice, to provide children with good parents. There is really no other way out.

These are some of the conclusions of what is probably the most thorough, intensive, and carefully planned study of the subject yet made. It is published in a book, *The Psychology of Character Development,* by Robert F. Peck (with Robert J. Havighurst and a number of others.) The survey was carried through 16 years. It is based primarily on 34 youngsters—a small sample indeed from a population of 180 million; but Dr. Peck argues that we can get at the heart of this matter only by dealing with individual cases, and that his conclusions are in general accord with those of all other studies made by different methods. One might add that they are in general accord with popular belief.

Dr. Peck had first to decide, "what is a moral character?" What are its elements? Following Freud and many others, he finally established five different types:

1. *Amoral.* This represents the infantile personality that never gets any farther. In later life it is often called the psychopathic personality.

2. *Expedient.* A person of this type is primarily self-centered and considers other people's welfare and reactions only in order to gain his personal ends. It represents very largely the behavior of early childhood, in contrast to that of the amoral person, who sticks by the behavior appropriate to an infant in its first years.

3. *Conforming.* This type, representing later childhood, has one general principle: to do what others do, what "they say" one "should" do.

4. *Irrational-conscientious.* This is an alternative representation of later childhood. Conformity to the group code is not the issue, as it is with No. 3; rather, No. 4 conforms to a code he has made his own and believes in. The irrational element derives from the fact that a thing is "good" or "bad"

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merely because he defines it as such, not necesesarily because it has positive or negative effects on others.

5. *Rational-Altruistic.* This describes the highest level of moral maturity, appropriate to healthy adolescence, or adult life. In the ideal case he is dependably honest, responsible, loyal, etc., because he sees such behavior is for everyone's well-being. He is as much concerned with assuring the well-being of others as with assuring his own. He reacts with emotions appropriate to the occasion. "Of all the adolescents studied, only these last (No. 5) are still growing psychologically, and still open to further growth. The other three-quarters of the research population appear to be fixed at immature levels of development, and in the ordinary course of events may remain permanently 'stuck' with childlike ways of viewing and meeting life."

This is a very inadequate summary of the book's extensive discussion of a very complicated subject, but it is enough to permit going on to the question, Why? Time and again Dr. Peck comes back to the same conclusion: "Character, as defined in this study, appears to be predominantly shaped by the intimate, emotionally powerful relationship between child and parents, within the family. Forces outside the family are not negligible nor irrelevant in their *indirect* effect on character formation but it looks as though these forces operate mainly as they shape and guide parents' behavior, and as they reward or otherwise reinforce child behavior that follows the socially approved parts of parents' behavior."

Four aspects of family interaction were found to be most significant: mutual trust and approval, consistency of family life, democratic control, and severity of parental punishment. "With only one possible exception in the whole research population, each adolescent is just about the kind of person that would be predicted from a knowledge of the way his parents treated him. Indeed, it seems reasonable to say that, to an almost startling degree, each child learns to feel and act, psychologically and morally, as just the kind of person his father and mother have been in their relationships with him."

Mother, because closer to the child and with him more, was found to have a more profound, direct influence on the child's character and personality than has the father; but with both parents, mature parental love and rational discipline are *both* essential, joint determinants of good character; either both these kinds of parental behavior occurred together or neither occurred in any mature form.

Following the consequences along many lines, in detail, Dr. Peck concludes that "parents cannot reasonably expect to turn over very much of the character training of their children to other people, whether in school, church, or youth organizations." But it is clear that all the persons concerned with children in these three

groups last named should be much more rigorously selected on grounds of maturity of their own personality and character. "At present nothing but lip service is given to this idea" . . . "In school, church, or scout work it is fatal to the development of mature character to enjoin behavior solely on the weight of authority . . . *Even if tradition is right,* to teach children to obey it simply *because* it is tradition, or an 'authority,' is to cripple their capacity to become truly mature and intelligently self-governing in their moral behavior."

Chief obstacle to progress, Dr. Peck admits sadly, is that "a good many Americans either do not really want children to become independently responsible beings, or they will not tolerate the frequent frustrations of selfish impulse which are required to treat a child in an ethical manner. This is true of a good many teachers and preachers, just as it is true of many millions of American parents."

"It appears, in summary, that the basic qualities of personality structure and of interpersonal attitude are predominantly created by the child's experiences with his parents." "Parental control which was at once consistent, trustful, averse to severe punishment, and giving some limited but growing practice in decision making—this kind of discipline produced mature, *self-disciplined* adolescents." "This is not to say that no other people, during his lifetime, could affect or change his character development. It is *possible* to exercise a curative (or destructive) influence even after the child has borne the impress of family experience for years. What the present data say—as is suggested by other studies—is that such later influences are seldom intensively enough and personally enough exerted, in this typical American community, to make any noteworthy change in the character of its children, for good or for ill. This is not to say that change *cannot* occur. It simply says that it *does not occur,* in most cases. Judging from the literature, from the public press, and from professional experience, it appears that this observation probably holds true for most American communities."

In practice, then, virtually the only hope of producing good citizens is to give children better parents—fathers and mothers who love each other, and love their children, in both cases at a mature adult level.

This well-written, persuasive, and important book must be read. If it has not turned up any conclusions that are startlingly new, it should at least help to focus attention on our present great and criminal failure to direct a fair amount of our thought and money to work at the one point where the most can be accomplished. Dr. Peck is professor of educational psychology at the University of Texas.

(THE PSYCHOLOGY OF CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT, by Robert F. Peck. Pp. 267, price $6.50 from John Wiley & Sons, 440 Fourth ave., New York 16, N.Y., 1960.)

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Educational Notes

BARRIERS BETWEEN PEOPLE is the theme of the annual meeting of the Child Study Assn. of America, to be held April 17, 1961, in New York City. It will be immediately followed

by the association's annual institute, whose theme will be "Coping with differences." The Associations hq are at 9 E. 89th st., New York 28, N.Y.

ONE LARGE GROUP in the population, which gets little educational or counseling attention, consists of the 30,000,000 residents of public and private institutions during any 12-month period. The institutions include hospitals for children, mental patients, narcotics users and general patients, training schools, jails, penitentiaries, and correctional facilities.—*Journal of Pastoral Care.*

PLAYS FOR LIVING, a division of the Family Service Assn. of America, announces a repertory of nine plays for its second season. Little theater groups and amateurs can get these, or a brochure describing them, from the hq., 215 Park ave. South, New York 3, N.Y. They are intended to present to any audience a vivid interpretation of common problems such as juvenile delinquency, unmarried mothers, parent-child relations, problems of old age, and school difficulties.

SCHOOL FOR HAPPINESS is the name sometimes given to the French language, Roman Catholic, "Family Institutes" of which there are now 44 in the province of Quebec, Canada. "Above and beyond the technical arts of domestic science," says an authorized description, "these schools give a thoroughly composite education in personal charm, intellectuality, citizenship, and the development of the entire personality." This semester 3,304 girls are attending these schools. Normally they enter after graduation from high school, although some are allowed to come in earlier for a four year course. In the third year, the girls spend 10 days in a foundling home, where each student "adopts" and takes complete charge of one orphan baby.

THE HYMN SOCIETY of America (475 Riverside Drive, New York 27, N.Y.) is inviting the composition of new hymns on marriage and family life, suitable for use in connection with the North American Conference on Church and Family, to be held April 30-May 5, 1961. Specifications and details may be had from the Society, not later than Feb. 15.

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Around the World

ALCOHOL has recently been placed at the top of the list of social problems in the USSR. Dr. I. S. Sokolov of the Central Research Institute for Health Education, Moscow, reports that the government is attempting to deal with it by prohibiting all advertising of alcoholic beverages, and treating alcoholics by group therapy and other sociological and psychological re-educative methods, in which the patient is required to take an active part.

SASKATCHEWAN has had pre-marital education courses the last two years of its high schools since 1950, but schools in other provinces are doing little in this direction, according to a survey made by Dr. S. C. Best, director of child health for Sakatchewan. Among churches and synagogues, he found Roman Catholics to be doing far more than any other group.

SEX MORALITY in the Soviet Union is decidedly stricter than in the "decadent" West, says David Mace, executive director of the American Association of Marriage Counselors, who with his family spent several months in the USSR last summer. Writing of

his observations in *Marriage Guidance* (London, Nov., 1960), he remarks that "after the first phase of the Revolution, the Communist Party accepted a near-Puritanical sex ethic. Compared with Western standards, prostitution is virtually non-existent, premarital sex relations are not common, and adultery is rare." Marriage counseling does not exist. The Soviets have built up a strong public opinion against divorce in recent years; the divorce rates are low and going lower. "Soviet marriage has strengths and weaknessess," he continues. "Our tendency in the West has been to look for Soviet weaknesses and magnify them. Because of this I was constantly surprised to find myself favorably impressed. I liked the feel of Soviet families as I met and mingled with them. I liked the comradeship between husband and wife. I liked the balance between loyalty to the family and loyalty to the wider community. I liked Soviet children—alert and friendly, neither over-boisterous nor over-obsequious in their relations with adults, remarkably free from quarrels in their cooperation with one another. I liked the clean feeling of living in a country devoid of the artificially contrived sexual stimulation with which our culture is becoming saturated. We have something to teach our Soviet friends, I am sure—if they will listen. I am equally sure that they have something to teach us—if we will listen."

GUATEMALA established, earlier this year, the first Children's Bank of Central America. Children make their own deposits and withdrawals directly, without intervention of either parents or teachers, and there are already more than 20,000 depositors. The bank pays 5% interest on accounts. The republic of El Salvador has followed with a similar bank and Mexico is planning to do so.

FAMILY ALLOWANCES, which are universal in European countries, have to be paid in part at least by the employer, and American corporations who have been setting up factories abroad have sometimes been astounded to find how much these "fringe benefits" pile onto their budgets. France's system of maternity and family allowances requires business firms to pay as much as 14½% of payroll into a government fund. These allowances are paid out as wage supplements so that a worker with two children, for example, gets 22% more than his basic wage, one with three children receives 55% more. In Italy the employer's contribution to the family allowance system may run as high as 33% of the worker's wage. Family allowances in Great Britain, on the other hand, are paid for out of the general tax revenues and business firms are spared from making direct contributions.

Research Notes

CHANCE OF LIVING to the ripest old age is, statistically, highest for Norwegian women, whose life expectancy at birth is 75 years. Sweden, Netherlands, England and Wales, Australia, and Denmark follow, then the U.S.A. where a baby girl's prospect is 73 years, that of a baby boy 6.3 years less.

PRECOCIOUS PUBERTY in either sex does not bring precocious sexual behavior. This is the general conclusion of Karl M. Bowman and Bernice Engle, who have reviewed the sub-

ject for a symposium on sex offenses, published as the Spring, 1960, issue of *Law and Contemporary Problems* (Duke University School of Law, Durham, N.C.) "It must be emphasized," they insist, "that while sexually precocious children may look like adolescents, they are, nevertheless, still children and must be treated as much like other children as possible. They are not usually oversexed, but merely prematurely developed; nor are they sex maniacs."

Inexpensive Pamphlets

FAMILY COURTS—an urgent need. Pp. 14, price 15c from Supt. of Documents, U.S. Govt. Printing Office, Washington 25, D.C. (Catalog No. FS 3.222:960/6.

RACE RELATIONS AND MENTAL HEALTH, by Marie Jahoda. Pp. 48, price 50c from Columbia University Press, 2960 Broadway, New York 27, N.Y.—A Unesco publication.

HOW TO RECOGNIZE AND HANDLE ABNORMAL PEOPLE, by Robert A. Matthews and Loyd W. Rowland. Pp. 72. Pub. by Natl. Assn. for Mental Health, 10 Columbus Circle, New York 19, N.Y.; can probably be obtained from your state mental health association. Prepared originally for police officers but valuable to a wide circle of other persons.

FILIAL RESPONSIBILITY in the modern American family, by Alvin L. Schorr. Pp. 45, price 25c from Supt. of Documents, U.S. Govt. Printing Office, Washington 25, D.C.

TENSIONS and how to master them, by George S. Stevenson and Harry Milt. Pp. 28, price 25c from Public Affairs Pamphlets (No. 305), 22 E. 38th st., New York 16, N.Y.

MONEY MANAGEMENT: your automobile dollar, Pp. 36, price 15c from Household Finance Corp., Prudential Plaza, Chicago 1, Ill.

OUTLOOK FOR THE ADULT RETARDED, Pp. 123, single copy free to those professionally interested, from The Woods Schools, Langhorne, Pa.

CAMPS FOR DELINQUENT BOYS, by George H. Weber. Pp. 61, price 25c from Supt. of Documents, U.S. Govt. Printing Office, Washington 25, D.C.

HOW EFFECTIVE are services for the treatment of delinquents? Pp. 23, price 15c from Supt. of Documents, U.S. Govt. Printing Office, Washington 25, D.C. (Catalog No. FS 3.222:960/9.)

DELINQUENCY AND ADOLESCENT GIRLS, Pp. 7, price 15c from Supt. of Documents, U.S. Govt. Printing Office, Washington 25, D.C. (Catalog No. FS 3.222:960/11.)

CEW CONFERENCE on counseling girls in high school and college, copies free on application to The Commission on the Education of Women of the American Council on Education, 1785 Massachusetts ave., NW., Washington 6, D.C.

SELECTED BOOKS of the year, about children, parents and family life, Pp. 48, price 50c from Child Study Assn. of America, 9 E. 89th st., New York 28, N.Y.

A CHRISTIAN APPROACH to the alcoholic beverage question, Pp. 16, single copy free on request to Board for Christian Social Action, American Lutheran Church, 57 East Main st., Columbus 15, Ohio.

WHEN YOUR PARENTS RETIRE, Pp. 16, free on request to Bayshore Gardens Council on Retirement, P.O. Box 4591, Sarasota, Fla.

NEW BOOKS IN BRIEF REVIEW

PROGRAMS FOR THE GIFTED, a case book in secondary education, ed. by Samuel Everett. Pp. 299, price $5.50 from Harper & Bros., 49 E. 33rd st., New York 16, N.Y., 1960.

Failure of many superior American young people to get appropriate education, or to go on to college, has inspired much soul-searching and study during recent years. This book is one of the results. It notes that "gifted" is defined more broadly than it was a generation ago, when reliance was placed almost wholly on the IQ and when L. M. Terman, for his own particular purpose, took the gifted to represent the highest 1% in the schools. Many gifted persons with special talents, in arts for instance, and in creativity, do not have remarkably high IQ's. Tendency now is to assume that the upper 15% or 20% of the school population "have the ability to study—effectively and rewardingly —advanced mathematics, foreign languages, physics, and chemistry" and should not be kept in lockstep with all others, or deprived of opportunities that will lead them to do their best. Survey of education in England, Germany, and the USSR leads to the conclusion that they are all doing better than the American average treatment of gifted students, but some school systems in the United States are equal to any in the world, from this point of view. A detailed description of a few of these superior schools provides an example for the rest to follow. It is clear that we know how to take proper care of our gifted, but it is expensive. Hundreds of American high schools need to be overhauled if they are to do justice to the upper 20% of their young people. This well-organized and well-written book, containing contributions from nearly a score of educators, is addressed primarily to the teaching profession but it should be of serious concern to every thoughtful citizen.

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THE TREASURY OF FAMILY FUN, by Nancy Cleaver. Pp. 420, price $4.95 from Fleming H. Revell Co., Westwood, N.J., 1960.

This valuable book is much more than a compilation of games, tricks, and entertainments. The author has provided parents with a wide range of educational material of a fascinating kind, together with some philosophy. The arrangement is by months, starting with appropriate celebrations of New Year's Day and ending not merely with Christmas but with Watch night (New Year's eve). Since the author is the wife of Rev. Arnold Mathews of Winnipeg, a minister of the United Church of Canada, and has herself been active in religious education, she includes some material that will aid individual development spiritually as well as physicially, intellectually, and socially. All of the books on family entertainment are valuable and should be much more widely used, but this one is really in a class by itself.

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GET THE MOST OUT OF YOUR BEST YEARS, by Maxine Davis. Pp. 224 (no index), price $4 from the Dial Press, 461 Park ave. South, New York 16, N.Y., 1960.

Subtitled "The intelligent woman's guide," this book would at least guide any woman intelligently. It is a comprehensive and sound discussion of the problems of middle and later years, written in Miss Davis' most vivid journalistic style. "Never have so many people had so wide an opportunity to select a new way of life at an age when they are equipped with self-knowledge and years of vitality and vigor ahead of them." There are few problems facing the mature woman, single, married, widowed, or divorced, that she does not touch. The author — wife, mother, and grandmother—has done a good job in this volume.

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THE NEXT CIVILIZATION, by Elmer Pendell. Pp. 238, price $3.75 from the author, 206 W. Mountain ave., Jacksonville, Alabama, 1960.

Surveys made in California once found that the family which had a child in the state university averaged two living children, while the family which had a child in the state institution for the feebleminded averaged five living children. If there were no further immigration into the state, in only a few generations the population would consist predominantly of people descended from the second type of family, not from the first. Would this result in any difference in the culture of the state? That, diagrammatically, is the problem that economist Pendell examines, and one that deserves more attention. Civilization is produced mainly by intelligent humans, he says. As civilization increases in complexity, the available human intelligence is decreasing, not increasing, due to the differential birthrate. There is naturally a lag here, so the people living in a high civilization do not realize that they lack the abilities to promote or even maintain it, which their ancestors possessed. The result is a decline and fall of civilization. This could be prevented if any population was smart enough to make sure that the competent part of the population regularly produced more children while the incompetent producer fewer and the most defective produced none at all. This is the problem of eugenics: simple in outline though very complicated in detail. Dr. Pendell outlines several possible procedures; he would extend sterilization to the most defective, and encourage the most able to have more children in some cases by artificial insemination of women with the sperm of great men of the present or past. Space does not permit an adequate picture of his proposals. Many people will dislike them; in that case they are invited to suggest better ones that will be effective. Unless effective eugenics measures can be found and adopted, it appears probable that every civilization must inevitably perish. The optimism and equalitarian ideals prevalent in the United States have led to a general refusal to recognize the eugenic problem; but it is still a problem.

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AGING: some biological and social aspects, ed. by Nathan W. Shock. Pp. 427, price $8.50 from American Assn. for the Advancement of Science, 1515 Massachusetts ave., NW., Washington 5, D.C., 1960.

With growing appreciation of the larger number of aged persons (16,000,000 over 65 years of age) in the population of the U.S. has come a rapidly increasing attention to the subject from many sides and a widespread

recognition of the need for more exact information,—in a word, for research. The AAAS held a symposium on the subject at its Chicago meeting in Dec., 1959, and publishes the proceedings just a year later. While some of the material is technical (e.g., clinical aging patterns in teeth of different population groups), most of it is of wide interest and value. The report points out that there is great need for some coordination of many lines of activity that now exist in any community. At present these are random, hit-or-miss affairs, often working in ignorance of each other or even at cross-purposes. While compulsory retirement at 65, with its loss of a paycheck, is a serious matter, the discussants agree that the psychic and "spiritual" consequences are far more serious, and many developments are described, which are dealing with them. This is a book that should be consulted frequently by responsible persons in any community.

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THE BIBLICAL VIEW OF SEX AND MARRIAGE, by Otto A. Piper. Pp. 239, price $3.95 from Charles Scribner's Sons, 597 Fifth ave., New York, N.Y., 1960.

Twenty years ago Dr. Piper (professor of New Testament at Princeton Theological Seminary) published a valuable book called *The Christian Interpretation of Sex*. The present volume is a rewriting of it, bringing it up to date. "There is hardly any other area of life in the Western world," the author well says, "that has been so profoundly affected by the recent general upheaval of social, political, and economic conditions as our evaluation of sex, and yet, strangely enough, there is no other sphere of social relations in which such radical and revolutionary change has been accepted with such ease and little opposition." Since the results of this change are scientifically unsound as well as personally and socially harmful, it is a standing reproach to thinkers that they have let the battle be almost lost through their own inertia, indifference, or cowardice, and many more books like this one of Dr. Piper, written from a variety of other points of view, are greatly to be desired. Not every man or woman who seeks correct guidance will be convinced by arguments, like those of Dr. Piper, drawn from a single source, —namely, the Bible. There are additional approaches that should also be developed more fully and frequently.

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A MODERN INTRODUCTION TO THE FAMILY, ed. by Norman W. Bell and Ezra F. Vogel. Pp. 691, price $7.50 from Free Press, Glencoe, Ill., 1960.

The average reader will get little from this textbook for advanced sociology students; indeed he will probably lay the book aside after reading the first paragraph, which informs him that "the framework is a structural-functional model cast in a transacting systems mold . . . still in a programmatic stage." Specialists will find much to interest them in the 51 papers by other specialists; most of these contributions were first published elsewhere. The blurb asserts that this volume is "the first book to present a coherent and scientific approach to the sociology of the family." Dr. Bell is associated with Harvard's laboratory of social relations, while Dr. Vogel, of Yale University, has done outstanding research in Japan and taught in several colleges and universities in the U.S.

THE CHANGING AMERICAN FAMILY, by Roger H. Crook. Pp. 160 (no index), price $2.95 from Bethany Press, Box 179, St. Louis 66, Mo., 1960.

Seeking "an insight into God's purposes for family living," as the book's subtitle explains, Dr. Crook considers particularly the role of the church in promoting successful marriage. He is a Southern Baptist minister and professor of religion at Meredith College, Raleigh, N.C. The book is well-written, well-balanced, and up to date.

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BIRTH CONTROL TODAY, by Leon F. Whitney. Pp. 143 (no index), price $2.95 from Thomas Nelson & Sons, 19 E. 47th st., New York 17, N.Y., 1960.

This little book, written in very simple and popular style, can be recommended to anyone who wants an understanding of contraception with abundant details. The author is a Connecticut veterinarian who has long been interested in genetics, eugenics, and the physiology of reproduction and has published a number of books on these subjects, as well as on dog breeding, on which he is an outstanding authority. Actual errors are few and unimportant. Many will dislike his advocacy of abortion, but that is a minor part of the book.

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POPULATION, FAMILLE, EDUCATION, —initiation aux problemes familiaux, by Michel Blanc et al. Pp. 320 (paper covers, no index), price 10 NF from Chronique Sociale de France, 16 rue du Plat, Lyon 2, France, 1960.

This is a textbook, produced by seven experts in various fields, for the use of those, especially young people, who are concerned with the problems facing the family in France and who are preparing to work in one part or another of this broad fieled. There is no better general survey of the subject, written for laymen and expressing the point of view of Action Sociale, the Roman Catholic organization.

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THE PSYCHOGENESIS OF MENTAL DISEASE, by Carl G. Jung, translated by R. F. C. Hull. Pp. 312, price $4.50 from Pantheon Books, 333 Sixth ave., New York 14, N.Y., 1960.

This represents Bollingen Series XX and is No. 3 in the collected works of Dr. Jung. It consists of ten papers, some of which were written more than half a century ago. Their importance is therefore now largely historical. The discussion of "The psychology of dementia praecox," which first appeared in 1908, has been considered a landmark in the understanding of this most important, numerically, of all mental diseases. It occupies first place in this book while the last place is a paper on the same subjeect, written in 1958. The republication of these papers, in this beautiful series, is a welcome contribution to the literature of psychiatry.

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FRENCH EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM was closely scrutinized at the annual meeting of the Federation of French Families, which passed resolutions declaring, among many other things, that "the training of our children by teachers must not rest on a science without conscience nor on instruction which does not dare to educate and which takes no account of the very different destinies of girls and boys, of farm children and city children."

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